

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Allis Ozornia and I am a healthcare coordinator, full spectrum doula and licensed massage therapist in New Haven, CT. I am also part of Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services.

I stand in support of HB 6616: "An Act Concerning Expansion Of Husky Health Benefits To Those Ineligible Due To Immigration Status". Expanding access to HUSKY regardless of immigration status is an important step in ensuring our immigrant community has access to the healthcare we need. If Connecticut wants a future that includes healthy families and a stable, thriving and growing workforce that is ready to meet the needs of our future, Connecticut must ensure that these individuals up to age 26 have access to health coverage.

I grew up on the border of Texas and Tamaulipas and am well acquainted with third and first world access to healthcare since a very young age. Because of this experience, I assisted the immigrant community for over a decade with access to reproductive health care services in South Texas. In the Fall of 2021, I moved to New Haven, CT to continue my studies at Yale and decided to continue my professional work as a healthcare coordinator for the *Services for Undocumented Neighbors* team at I.R.I.S. In the last three weeks while at I.R.I.S, I have gained insight into how Husky provides healthcare for pregnant people and children under 12 regardless of immigration status and this is a great step; however- extending the age limit to 26 will ensure that many more people are able to continue their lives with one, or more, less detriment(s). In the short time I have been at I.R.I.S. I have already seen many people turned away because they do not fall into these categories. Many people will remain untreated and many people will die because they do not have access to proper healthcare.

I am here to remind you that healthcare is a human right and no person regardless of immigration status should be turned away for care because of age or procreation circumstance. Most importantly, I am here to remind you that many, many migrants choose to not have children, many cannot have children and many are not heterosexual. I am here to remind you that the LGBTQ+ immigrant community NEEDS access to healthcare, and expanding healthcare to all ages will help the LGBTQ+ immigrant community tremendously.

Furthermore, the proposed age expansion will help us healthcare workers better serve our clients. The expansion will help alleviate many of the reasons why so many of us are burnt out or over saturated with cases. Expanding healthcare services will help case managers and health care coordinators in the state become better advocates and guides for immigrant people seeking care services.

I support HB 6616 and I ask the committee to support and pass this legislation out of committee in its current form - to expand HUSKY access to age 26. Our work does not end with expanding access up to age 12 nor with expanding access up to age 18. And that work must continue this year by expanding HUSKY access up to age 26. Looking forward, I ask the committee to work towards opening access to all immigrants regardless of age.

Thank you for your time,
Allis Ozornia